

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## HONORING THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

**HON. JAMES P. MORAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2011*

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the American Society for Training and Development, ASTD, as the largest association dedicated to the training and development profession, recognizing them for their annual Employee Learning Week, held December 5 through the 9, 2011.

Members of ASTD come from more than 100 countries and connect locally in 125 U.S. chapters with 20 international partners. They work in thousands of organizations of all sizes, in government, as independent consultants, and as suppliers.

Established in 1943, ASTD is a leader in the training and development field. As businesses seek competitive advantages and growth, learning and development professionals make sure an organization's best asset, its employees, have the skills they need to help achieve business growth. ASTD serves this important community of professionals with research and resources.

To further these goals, ASTD has declared December 5 through December 9, 2011, as "Employee Learning Week" and designated time for organizations to recognize the strategic value of employee learning. I applaud ASTD and its members for their dedication to developing knowledgeable and skilled employees during Employee Learning Week.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting policies that commit to maintaining a highly skilled workforce.

U.S. CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN  
HONORS JAN KARSKI

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 5, 2011*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Helsinki Commission and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Poland Caucus, I rise today to speak about the legacy of Jan Karski, the Polish resistance fighter who risked his life over and over again to bring first-hand reports of the mass murder of Jews in German-occupied Poland to the allied governments. 2014 will be the centennial of Karski's birth, making this a fitting time to remember and honor the heroism of this man.

To that end, a "Jan Karski U.S. Centennial Campaign" has been launched. This campaign will shine a spotlight on this historic figure of towering moral authority, and will increase public knowledge about Jan Karski's extraordinary courage and commitment. This American campaign is joined by a similar un-

dertaking by the Polish History Museum in Warsaw, Poland.

I would like to have reprinted with my remarks today the eloquent tribute to Jan Karski made recently by David Harris, Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee. For those who are unfamiliar with Karski's singular effort to sound the alarm regarding the unfolding Holocaust in Europe, I urge them to read David's description, published in the Jerusalem Post, of what Jan Karski did, and why it still matters today.

[Oct. 17, 2011]

ODE TO JAN KARSKI

(By David Harris)

He passed away in 2000, at the age of 86.

The more time goes by, the more I miss him. Precisely when his voice is needed more than ever, he is no longer among us.

In 1914, Jan Karski (né Koziński) was born to a Catholic family in Poland. The youngest of eight children, in 1939 he was mobilized in the Polish army just before the Nazi invasion on September 1. His wartime saga as officer, as Soviet prisoner, as escapee, in the hands of the Gestapo, and as a Polish Underground activist and courier, is beyond remarkable.

In a world today where words such as "courage" and "heroism" have been so overused—applied freely from sports to entertainment to politics—as to be rendered practically meaningless, Jan Karski was the rare human being who embodied both.

He put his life on the line repeatedly in defense of higher principles—the struggle against Nazism and the defense of his homeland, Poland. He carried with him all his life the physical scars of his experience, including the wrists he slit in an attempted suicide after prolonged beating by his Nazi captors.

The emotional scars never healed, either. Nor did he want them to. After the war, serving on the faculty of Georgetown University for four decades, he would not allow what he had witnessed to fade from memory, though, given his unusual modesty, he refused to make a second career from his past exploits.

He had seen the monstrous, indescribable bestiality of the Third Reich unleashed throughout Poland. And Poland was the epicenter of the Nazi grand design.

In 1944, he wrote a book, *Story of a Secret State: My Report to the World*, after he had reached the United States on assignment to recount what he had seen in Poland to American officials. Once here, he was told by his superiors not to return because his underground cover had been blown.

The book was an instant bestseller. Over the years, however, it faded into obscurity. Now it has been republished by Penguin in the United Kingdom, with, it is to be hoped, an American edition to follow.

It is a gripping account. Indeed, it should be must-reading for an understanding of the Second World War from the ground up.

In effect, it tells three stories.

The first is of Karski, especially from the years 1939 to 1944.

The narrative is straightforward, unadorned, and moving—a sobering reminder of what man is capable of when moral and physical courage meld into one.

The second is of wartime Poland, and especially the development of the Polish resistance movement.

There is no other story like it in occupied Europe. Not only did local officials refuse to collaborate with the Nazis, unlike the experience in France, Norway, and many other countries, but the combined efforts of the Polish government-in-exile and the elaborately woven underground were beyond anything imaginable at the time.

And the third was of the Polish Jewish tragedy.

Before the clandestine journey that took him to London and Washington, to meetings with the likes of British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden and U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, Karski, wearing a Star of David armband, was smuggled twice into the Warsaw ghetto. Later, disguised as a guard, he spent hours in a Nazi camp that shipped Jews to the Belzec death camp.

What he saw in the Warsaw Ghetto and Izbica Lubelska never left him.

Here is what he wrote in *Story of a Secret State*: "I know history. I have learned a great deal about the evolution of nations, political systems, social doctrines, methods of conquest, persecution, and extermination, and I know, too, that never in the history of mankind, never anywhere in the realm of human relations did anything occur to compare with what was inflicted on the Jewish population of Poland."

Then he asks: "Is it still necessary to describe the Warsaw ghetto?"

Fortunately, he answered his own question. Unfortunately, however, not everyone read his response.

In the past decade alone, after Karski's death, we have witnessed a flurry of pro-Palestinian activists—from members of the British Parliament like George Galloway, Oona King and Jenny Tonge, to Norwegian diplomat Trine Lelling; from U.N. rapporteur Richard Falk to Portuguese Nobel laureate José Saramago; from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to Spanish newspaper cartoonists—who superimpose Nazi terminology on Israel with abandon, including obscene comparisons of the Warsaw Ghetto and Gaza Strip.

Here's Karski's reply at the time: "So much has already been written about it, there have been so many accounts by unimpeachable witnesses. A cemetery? No, for these bodies were still moving, were indeed often violently agitated. These were still living people, if you could call them such. For apart from their skin, eyes, and voice there was nothing human left in these palpitating figures. Everywhere there was hunger, misery, the atrocious stench of decomposing bodies, the pitiful moans of dying children, the desperate cries and gasps of a people struggling for life against impossible odds."

And then, perhaps anticipating what the impact of time and distance might mean for understanding this era, Karski wrote: "I know that many people will not believe me, will not be able to believe me, will think I exaggerate or invent. But I saw it."

Until his dying day, Karski stood as a guardian of the past and its relevance to the present. He remained a fierce anti-communist and, fortunately, lived to see his beloved Poland return to the democratic family of nations, including accession to NATO. He served as an early warning system against the recurrence of anti-Semitism. And he understood the central role of Israel in the life of the Jewish people.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.